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August 24, 2002

I am a former employee at the U.S. Postal Service, currently receiving a disability retirement pension. My disability is caused by multiple chemical sensitivities and allergies which cause serious respiratory problems. Smoke also affects my eyes, ears, throat, nose, and chest. I have headaches, fatigue, skin problems, muscle twitching, and impaired thinking, concentration and comprehension. Agitation, irritability and being distraught are also included. These problems are aggravated by certain environmental factors, including exposure to airborne chemicals, dust or smoke. I am receiving ongoing treatment for this condition, but even with treatment I cannot tolerate exposure to these irritants.

I reside in Robins, a small town in Linn County, Iowa. (Robins ranked third in Iowa in growth from 1989 - 1999, according to recent Census Bureau statistics from the Cedar Rapids Gazette, in an article dated June 4, 2002.) The State of Iowa has delegated administration of its air quality laws to Linn County. Among other things, Linn County regulates open burning of yard waste and trash within its boundaries. Linn County has for some time, prohibited open burning within certain urban areas within Linn County, including Cedar Rapids, the county seat. Open burning has been allowed in Robins, where I live. The adjacent communities of Cedar Rapids, Hiawatha and Marion prohibit burning.

Many people in Robins routinely burn their yard waste and/or household garbage. This kind of burning has a severe impact on me. The airborne pollutants greatly exacerbate my problems. I am forced to stay inside or leave until the pollution dissipates. Staying in the house has its own problems: 1) polluted air seeps in; 2) air cleaners are not ideal. I can no longer use the carbon filters; and 3) air conditioning is problematic.

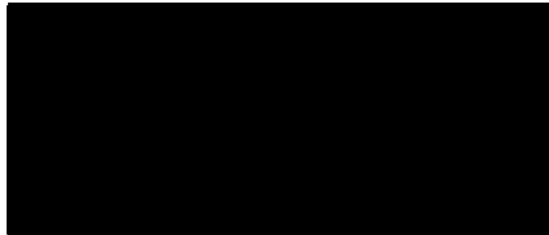
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Earlier this year the Linn County Department of Public Health recommended that the ban on open burning be extended to include Robins. Many of the residents of Robins opposed this change and the Health Department decided to hold a public hearing on the issue.

I attended that hearing and also the Board of Supervisors meeting and spoke in favor of extending the burn ban. I explained the problems that I experienced (at the Health Department meeting), presented written information at the Board of Supervisors meeting, and told the Board I was the one with the allergy problem. I also presented other written information at the Health Department meeting that was given to the Board of Supervisors.

Following the public hearings, Linn County decided to continue to allow open burning in Robins. I learned about that decision on May 15, 2002.

Sincerely,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.